



## **THE NEW** **CONSECRATION SUNDAY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM**

By Herb Miller

(Emphasizes growing in faith through our giving by growing one step closer to tithing or beyond.)

This annual financial campaign takes place over a period of at least six weeks from an initial meeting of the steering committee to the date of Consecration Sunday. The program kit includes an introductory audio cassette tape which can be played for the Finance Committee, Stewardship

Committee, or Church Council; a Stewardship Program book for use by the members of the Steering Committee, a copy of the estimate of giving card, and a Guest Leader's Guide.

The campaign involves a Guest Leader who conducts an initial meeting with the steering committee, a special Leadership Event for church council members and other church leaders, the Consecration Sunday worship services, and a presentation of the results at the Celebration Meal. Members of the congregation are recruited to share their testimonies on why it's important to them to give to Christ through the Church and how it impacts their life of faith.

This program focuses on the need of the giver to give and invites everyone to consider taking one step-up in their personal stewardship as a disciple of Christ. The emphasis is not on paying the bills of the church. Instead, members are asked to consider what God is calling them to give in thanksgiving for the blessings they have received.

The congregation is responsible for:

- 3 mailings – 2 letters to the total congregation and 1 letter to leaders in the church
- 3 laity announcements for the 3 weeks prior to Consecration Sunday
- Making phone calls to invite those who haven't made a reservation for the Celebration Meal to attend Consecration Sunday and the Celebration Meal
- A stewardship sermon by the pastor on the week prior to Consecration Sunday
- Preparing a step-chart that outlines the number of giving units at each level of giving during the previous 12 months.
- Planning a meal or special refreshments for the Leadership Event held on the Sunday or Monday prior to Consecration Sunday. The Leadership Event is led by the Guest Leader. It is a time in which church leaders are thanked for their commitment to the church and participate in an inspirational stewardship message by the Guest Leader. In addition, they are asked to volunteer to make the necessary phone calls to those who still haven't made a reservation for the Celebration Meal on Consecration Sunday.
- Providing a meal on Consecration Sunday – it may be catered or provided by a few members of the congregation. It is not to be a potluck!

Churches that wish to apply for the \$250 scholarship from the Wisconsin U.M. Foundation to cover the honorarium for Guest Leaders must select a Guest Leader from the list of those provided by the Foundation and submit a copy of the Guest Leader Agreement to the Foundation. It is the church's responsibility to pay the Guest Leader on Consecration Sunday. When the Consecration Sunday results are submitted to the Foundation along with a Scholarship Application, churches that qualify for a scholarship will be reimbursed.

Cost: \$9.00/Program Book for each committee member and \$10.00/packet of 100 Estimate of Giving Cards from [www.cokesbury.com](http://www.cokesbury.com)  
\$250 Honorarium for Guest Leader plus travel at IRS rate  
Mailing costs, Leadership Event and Catered Celebration Meal